

*(SBD)*

which viscosity is lower than  $4 \times 10^{-2}$  Pa.s at a shear rate of  $50 \text{ s}^{-1}$  and wherein the amount of silica present in the supernatant obtained after centrifuging the said suspension at 7500 revolutions per minute for 30 minutes represents more than 50 % of the weight of the silica present in the suspension, comprising the steps of :

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(A) precipitating silica by reacting an acidifying agent with an alkali metal (M) silicate, by:

- (i) providing an initial base stock, comprising at least a proportion of the total amount of the alkali metal silicate introduced into the reaction, and an electrolyte, the silicate concentration, expressed as  $\text{SiO}_2$ , in the said initial base stock being lower than 100 g/l and the electrolyte concentration in the said initial base stock being lower than 17 g/l;
- (ii) adding the acidifying agent to said base stock until a pH value of the reaction mixture of at least approximately 7 is obtained;
- (iii) adding simultaneously the acidifying agent, and if appropriate, the remaining amount of the silicate to the reaction mixture;

(B) separating from the reaction mixture a precipitation cake which has a solids content of between 10 and 40%; and

(C) deagglomerating said cake to obtain a suspension of agglomerates having a median diameter D<sub>50</sub> smaller than 5  $\mu\text{m}$ , whereby a suspension of low viscosity is provided.